

**A NEW CRANFORD: BEING A MORE OR LESS TRUE  
ACCOUNT OF AN EXPERIMENT**

**DEDICATED TO OUR DEAR J. B., WHO OF ALL OTHERS BEST  
UNDERSTANDS WHAT PROMPTED ITS UNDERTAKING**

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**PART SECOND**

**I. THE BACKSLIDE OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR**

THE time was when the backslidings of humans were considered solely from a moral standpoint, but we are beginning to find physical defects, environment, diet, and many other reasons, often very far-fetched, as excuses for the frailties of mankind. The exemplary conduct of William the Conqueror for many months lulled us into a feeling of security which was unhappily ill-founded. We had decided that his former riotous behavior was entirely due to his diet, and were prepared to argue at great length with the extreme vegetarians, who charge all the sins of mankind to meat (what a joyous season was theirs through the recent meat scandals!) and all man's virtues to vegetables.

Certainly Billiam is a living contradiction of the moral effect of oats. Soon after all the ploughing, harrowing, and cultivating was done, about the first of August, he showed his first premonitory symptoms of backsliding by making sudden sidewise plunges from automobiles, which he had seen daily all summer. I made a journey to town alone one day when he made several such excursions off the road. When we got home Euphemia and Friday were across the ravine, so I tied him and went indoors to divest myself of "go-to-town" clothes. Hearing wheels, I looked out, to see him wandering across the yard, his halter broken and dangling. Not knowing what else to do, I loosened one of the reins and led him back to his post—which did not at all suit his lordship—and again went indoors. Again hearing wheels, I ran out to find him eating sunflowers and threatening to overturn the buggy or break the wheels on the pear trees. The rein was broken. This time he positively declined any of my attentions, tossed his head and kicked at me, while he continued lunching on pears and sunflowers. Finally I was compelled to call to Euphemia, across the ravine, and the very minute she called "Billy!" in her most commanding tone he sedately walked back into the path with the most lamb-like aspect, as though nothing could ever induce him to misbehave.

About this time Tom, who had been learning to drive alone, went to town with some loads of apples. The first trip went off very happily, and the youngster was delighted with himself, but the next time everything went wrong, Billiam bolting at automobiles, pile-drivers, switch-engines, street-cars, and even bits of paper, until the poor child's arms were nearly pulled off and his face covered with dust and tears when he got home.

We were advised to get a certain kind of bit which pinches and hurts cruelly when a horse attempts bolting. It did not take long to discover that our rascal had evidently been acquainted with such a bit at some earlier period.

We drove to town one evening, Tom going on his bicycle, and on arriving at the railway crossing, which seems to be our doom, a sputtering, fussy little switch-engine came darting out of a freight shed, the fireman unfortunately opening his door to shovel in more coal just as the engine passed us. Billiam literally arose to the occasion; he reared so suddenly that he looked as high as the Flatiron Building in New York, to our terrified eyes. Euphemia cut him with the whip, but when he plunged forward the new bit gripped him, and at once, for the first time in his life, he began frantically to back, over the switch tracks, off the pavement, and into the cinders, while the other engines whistled wildly and every man and boy shouted at us as if they thought we didn't know we were going to be smashed to bits. How we got out without a scratch no man knows, but we did, and found Tom's scared white face waiting for us across the tracks.

After a solemn family conclave it was decided that Billiam's oats must be cut down, which was done, and, except for an occasional prance, we jog to town as peaceably as sheep. I am now experimenting upon my family to decide whether oatmeal porridge for breakfast will account for lost report-cards, running away from Sunday school, forgetting to brush one's teeth, and other juvenile shortcomings, but I am not yet prepared to publish the results of my investigations.

(To be Continued)

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Joy and Temperance and Repose  
Slam the door on the doctor's nose.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.